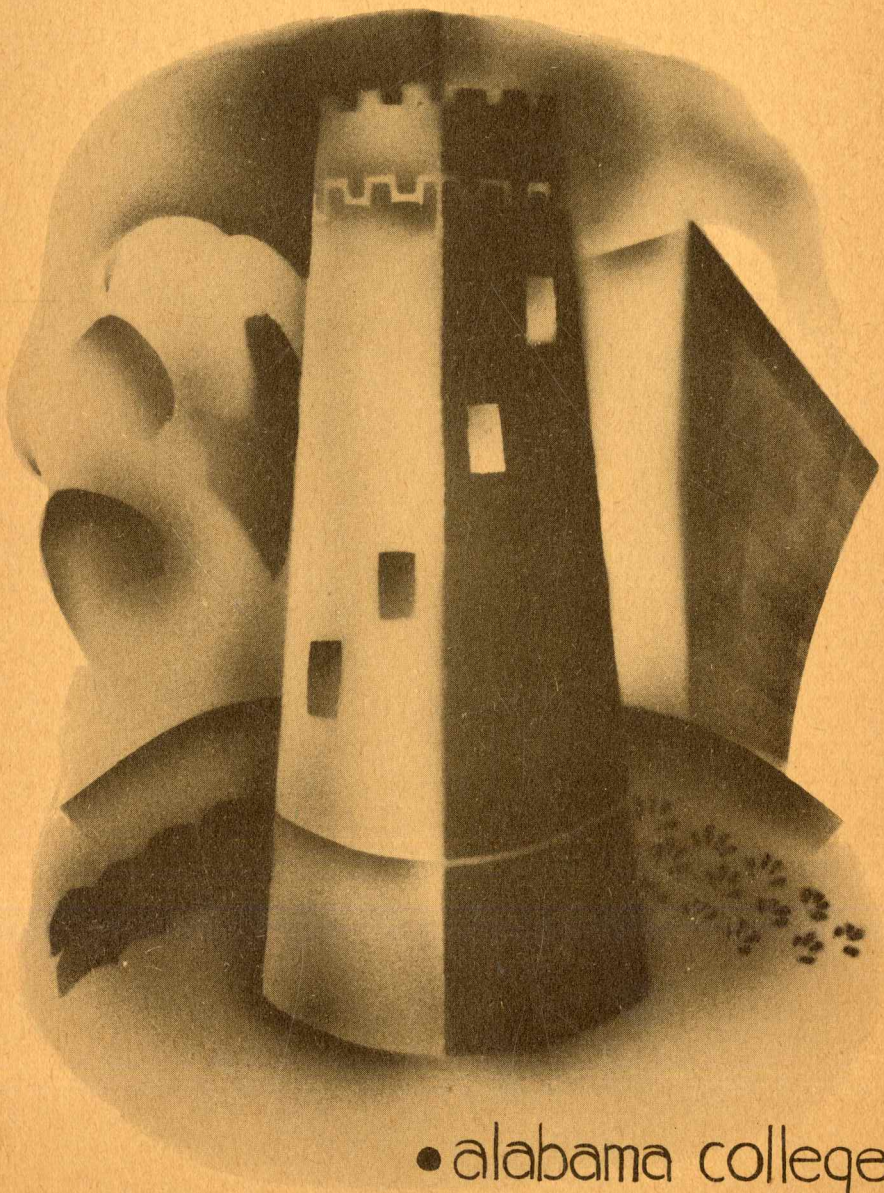
the TOWER



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the TOWER

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ALABAMA COLLEGE
MONTEVALLO, ALABAMA

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These Are Our Lives

FOREWORD

No Ivory Tower

THE EDITORS have chosen to speak to you not in a final curtain call, but in a preliminary moment of prologue. The very necessity for such a foreword is evidence of the *Tower's* change in view, its shift in accent.

This magazine counts among the more valuable of its inheritances the name, *Tower,* eloquent in symbolic significance, reminiscent of a campus memory in loyalty to which we are undivided. Though it is probable that the tower on Alabama College campus has various meanings for us individually, it signifies for our group collectively, beauty, and the charm of meaningful tradition. Yet, while we view the tower in this light let us not forget that fundamentally this grey-lined, ivy-grown structure has as its reason for being, a definite purpose and a function identifiable with everyday living. It is a thing of past and present, of beauty and use.

Because we so visualize our tower, the staff finds it appropriate that the magazine, in keeping with its birthright, make the cultivation of similar traits its goal. Conscious that the tower is abstractly beautiful but also basically functional in our campus life, its namesake assumes as its two-fold yet integral task a presentation of beauty and a frank concern with today's problems.

We shall never be content with our *Tower* if it is a mere ivory tower of seclusion and withdrawal. Can we not see it instead as a vantage point from which we may look out in these days of unrest in calm surveyal of truth?

With these reflections, the *Tower* states its present policy, already discussed in part in the *Alabamian.* We accept writing which is representative not of an exclusive group but of a wide departmental range. This decision brings in material of a controversial nature which we encourage because it stimulates thought on vital issues. If we have ventured from pure belletristic style, it has been done only after thoughtful evaluation of student body wishes and capabilities.

Above all, the *Tower* policy is in essence democratic. We welcome your sincere comment, and urge your frank criticism, particularly of the more experimental phases of the present issue.

—*The Editor.*

SKETCHED *In Shadow*

By MADIE BELLE WARD, '40

THE NIGHT became, strangely, that other night. Borne back by haunting strains of music, memory of that experience returned, stronger than present surroundings, and surged over me. Always, I think, that music will evoke those same impressions.

That other was the night of the concert, I remember. Entering only a moment before the opening of the curtain, we saw her as we were ushered to our seats. She was talking to a circle of friends, as usual. She was one of those whom, you would feel, life must have left strangely untouched when others experienced crises, came out with scars. Poised, happy, she looked about her that night with an accustomed calm of expression and clear, untroubled gaze. As I watched her face I remember musing as I often had before—How can she be always like this?—Does life, in an indulgent mood, leave some unscathed?

So intent I was in thinking of her, I was practically unconscious of lowering lights, and saw still in memory the pattern of her face delicate in outline on the unparted curtain, black in the surrounding half-light of dull white walls.

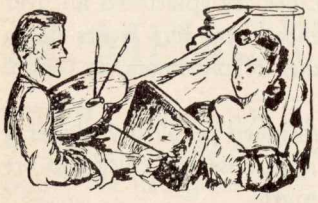
That night we heard, I remember, the sort of music that stirs memories, calls up little ephemeral, half-forgotten snatches of experience from past to vivid present. Potent and inescapable, music reached out, stirring up these recollections regardless of conscious will to linger over them or frantic determination to forget—music half-joy, half-pain. I felt, and imagined that those around me shared more than ever before, a distinct sense that we, the audience, were united by a strange bond, powerful in its unspoken, half-insinuated claim. We listened as if with one ear to a voice that spoke to that part of us that nullifies differences, personalities, and variations.

As the first of a series of selections drew to a tremulous, whispering close, there was a moment of exquisite silence, full and deep, while the audience, still lost to its single identity, seemed to strain for a last faint echo, to cry out inwardly and silently for a re-expression of a moment of perfection. Then began the applause, seeming an almost blatantly irreverent intrusion of the present into timeless revery and concentration.

Glancing about as the lights were raised, I saw first her face. Yes, it was the same face but influenced by a swift moment of change. Music, it seemed, had reached out with sly, insistent fingers and stripped her countenance as if of a mask, leaving in its stead a shadow, the unmistakable etching that only sorrow or intense feeling can put there.

Was it only untamed imagination that made me glance at it and fancy it a scar?

The moment passed. Turning aside I trembled with the sensation one has on looking unbidden into the secret things of life or the intimacy of another's unspoken grief.



SYNOPSIS

By MARY STERNE, '41

DALE is a gorgeous woman. Those who merely see her envy her, but those who know her pity her. She possesses that charm, that glamour, that picks a woman out of the main thoroughfare of the commonplace and sets her up before the world in a seemingly enviable position.

You see her face on billboards, on magazine covers, in every advertisement. You read, "Dale Allen smokes only Luckies, Dale Allen buys Packards, Sam Thurston's famous model eats only Wheaties for breakfast . . ."

Sam Thurston is an artist, a worshipper of beauty, a lover of perfection. He saw Dale in a dentist's office. She wore a white uniform and handed the dentist his instruments. Sam knew she was a gold mine. He took her from the drudgery of her work to what he called the correct life, the life befitting a woman of her charm. He worked untiringly, painted her in cruise costumes, in bathing suits, in formals. He sold her pictures for fabulous sums.

Then two inevitable things happened. She got an offer from the movies. They fell in love. But wait! Though Dale fell in love with Sam, Sam loved a plain, sweet woman who has made him an excellent wife.

Dale left for Hollywood after the wedding. She is now the most-talked-of star in the movie colony and her name blazes her renown on a million marquees from coast to coast. You too have seen her play some role magnificently. Whenever you see again that dreamy expression in her face you may know as I do that she's thinking of Sam Thurston in his paint-smeared smock, working on her portrait.

Of course, you must wonder how I am acquainted with Dale, and how I know the inner meaning of that expression she wears when she is in the arms of her leading man. I know, for when I hold her in my arms she dreams also. You see, I am her husband.

Silhouette

By MARGUERITE WALTON, '42

OUTLINED against the light blue sky in bold contrast, a negro sits on the bare dirt and leans against the rough bark of a tree. That face, black as death, shows so much. Lines are splattered all over it. They run deep as gullies across his forehead and like rivers down his cheeks. His skin reminds one of the leather of old boots, so tough, so used.

Look at those eyes! Under a curtain of resigned perplexity, under a curtain of blankness what depth is there! His huge nose and thick lips are only slightly indicative of his superlative strength.

Here is a human being—a man—so meek, so humble. So meek that he would not dare speak to the smallest white child without removing his hat. What thoughts invade that massive head? What ideas? What opinions lie behind that guarded expression of resigned acceptance?

Have we bettered this man's plight by removing him from his native home? What right have we to subordinate this surging spirit? Look at him as he sits nodding, his corded muscles completely relaxed. The mere thought of the power there is shocking. But put him behind a bale of cotton and tell him to push it. Watch the beautiful curves mold as his muscles contract in sheer strength.

We say that we have brought him into civilization. Is it civilized to force into passivity a spirit as full of fire and life as his? A magnificent human structure—silenced!

But within him, his heart beats like the tum-tums of his native jungle and deep, deep in his soul, the fire of a savage race still smoulders, unreleased.

FOR DREAMS SUCH AS THIS

Still—Motionless,
Spun in Nature's finest web,
Spun from Nature's finest thread,
Sapphire blue swept with white,
The floor of heaven gleams.

Pure—Beautiful,
Painted with bold brush stroke,
Painted wide like outflung cloak,
Dreamy fabric lined with light,
The ceiling of earth beams.

Fragile—Delicate,
Woven from sunlight rays,
Woven in rainbow ways,
Softest down stitched so bright,
The sky is made from dreams.

—*Martha McRae,* '42.

A MEMORY

By VIOLET BELCHER, '43

I WILL never forget the last visit to my grandfather before his long illness and death. The beach had been his home for a very long time. He had gone there for his health. I visited him every summer and, of course, always had a wonderful time. I think that on this last visit, I must have felt that something would be changed about the place before I returned. The day before I left I walked around as in a dream, all the while drinking in the beauty of the beach, the sky, and the ocean. On all my visits before, as I left for home, I always took a long look at everything; but this time I watched every change of scene the whole day long.

We got out of bed before sunrise that morning to catch sand fleas for fish bait that day. The sea was very blue and calm. Hardly a ripple could be seen, except at the very edge of the beach where tiny waves were playing. They seemed to be teasing us, for every time we would reach to pick up a sand flea, which a wave had just washed up, another little wave would dash up and wash it right out of our hands.

The sand was a glistening white, except where small patches of brown seaweed grew. We could see no other vegetation anywhere, for along the beach about fifty feet from the water, as far as the eye could see, rose a great sand dune. The sky was a pale blue with a rosy tint in the east where the sun would soon rise. But the light was still dim.

My grandfather must be described in this scene to make it perfect. He was the life of the scene. I trudged along a great distance behind him and did not think of myself as being there but being outside somewhere looking in. He was walking toward the east and was silhouetted against the pale sky. He was barefooted so that he could wade in the water, and I could see that his pants' legs were rolled halfway to his knees. He carried a bucket in his hands. Every few moments he would bend over and dip his hands in the water and sand to pick up a sand flea.

My grandfather always looked to me like an aged ship captain—one who had sailed an old-fashioned sailing ship. He was bald-headed and always wore a seaman's cap. He had only one eye, and he wore a black patch over the bad eye. As I saw him going down the beach, I

imagined him as a captain who had retired, and because of his love for the sea spent most of his declining years beside it. As he walked on, the sun gradually moved up a little higher, until it was a huge, red ball on the horizon. It looked as though my grandfather were walking right into it.

As the sun got higher and higher, the waves on the water became bigger and more ferocious. The color of the sea gradually turned to green, and the sky became a deep blue. There was not a cloud in sight. The sun was so bright, and the sand sparkled so that I had nearly to shut my eyes to see at all.

The scene remained unchanged until the evening when the sun was setting. As the sun slipped on down and down, its light grew softer and softer. When it reached the horizon, it seemed to stop and rest for a moment. It looked very much as it had that morning, except that it was a deeper red. The whole sky took on a pink glow. The sea turned a deeper green, and the waves were calmer. Way out on the sea there was a small sailboat slowly gliding along. A mist crept up on the horizon. As the sun slipped behind the horizon, the mist caused the pink of the sky to turn to purple. Soon, as the sun got further below the horizon, the purple turned to black, and the stars began to wink at the earth.

My grandfather and I, who had been watching this pageantry of the sunset, turned our backs to the west and went toward the cabin. As I went through the door, I glanced over my shoulder and saw, rising in the east, a great yellow moon.

THAT WE MAY DREAM

O Sleep! Ye thief of time!
Deadener of senses—
Inspire our dreams!
Let us not thus fade
Into nothingness.
Small profit though we reap,
Leave it to us.

The night swiftly slips away,
The soft darkness steals away,
Caress of starlight,
Touch of moonglow,
Fingers of fresh dew,
All of these must pass away
Ere dawn.

O Sleep! Ever unrequited
Beggar of our future!
Worlds turn, nations change—
You possess our souls!
From nothingness
Release our fettered
Consciousness in dreams.

—*Martha McRae,* '42.

If SHE HAD ONLY KNOWN

By LUCILLE WEAVER, '41

THE two men walked thoughtfully, their footsteps falling noiselessly on the padded floor of the white corridor. They were powerfully built men, one very light and Nordic, the other dark and compelling.

At the opposite end of the hall a young girl, stylishly clothed, and a nurse emerged from a door. The girl's arms, clad in dark green silk, were clasped about the shoulders of the large older woman who gently pushed the girl away, saying, "Now don't stall any more; you should be gone, and I have other patients waiting."

"Yes, yes, I know," replied the girl hurriedly, restraining her high-pitched voice with difficulty. Her gloved hands made a gesture of hopelessness, and she said despairingly, "Allen, you don't realize what all your attention and thoughtful care have done for me. I might have . . ."

"Sh, sh. Of course, dear," the woman said as she patted the impulsive hands. "You must remember to be much more careful than you have been before," she admonished. Nurse Allen was an experienced hand at quelling emotional demonstrations of undying gratitude for her efficient services to patients who pulled through the Dark Shadows.

The girl was not yet appeased, however. "Tell me, Allen, please tell me who—" she began.

"No," firmly. "Hospital regulations. If the donor preferred anonymity, it certainly is not for me to give away his identity. Now run along. Come back to see me often."

The girl shrugged her slender shoulders in a gesture of futility. She turned and started up the corridor, looking back to wave one more farewell to the woman watching her departure. As she waved she bumped against someone. She stopped suddenly and opened her mouth to express her regret over the mishap when to her amazement she saw the injured person was bowing low before her. When he looked up there was a brilliant smile on his lips.

He stepped toward her, extending his hand eagerly, saying, "Ah, at last I am to make the acquaintance of the beautiful Miss Llewelyn . . ."

Catherine Llewelyn's hazel eyes blazed and color flooded her thin cheeks. "Another mercenary leech on my trail," she cried, "but *this* one won't be long, even if I did offer him the decency of an apology!" She struck the proffered hand sharply and continued her way haughtily.

The man thus humiliated received the blow and the bitter words in utter astonishment which gave way to bewilderment. Presently he turned to his companion and faltered, "Why, I meant no harm. Isn't she . . ?"

His companion caught him gently by the arm and pulled him on. "She couldn't have known. But *she,* not *you,* is a leech."

Nurse Allen, who had seen all the episode, turned away with a shrug. "That's the thanks he gets for contributing his life-restoring blood to her. If she could only have known . . ."

BORN TO DISILLUSION

Too young, too wise,
Born to the disillusion of after years,
Groping through the darkness of depression, prohibition;
Hopeless, agnostics,
We face the world defiantly,
And dare to see the truth.
Standing on the precipice whence from the depths
we climbed,
We look into the dark abyss of Death
And dare to laugh.
Shrill, hysterical, dying laughter
Echoes back at us from the pit,
And suddenly we know the force of Gotterdammerung.

We foresee the chaos of the world,
We shiver in the twilight.

Doomed, wrecked, hopeless,
We can not stop destruction.

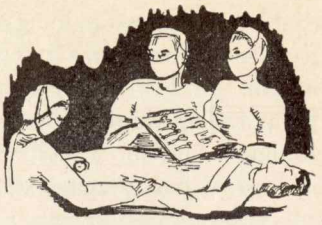
—*Lucile Adair Argo,* '42.

CYCLE

One morning as I wandered early
In the fresh, cool green of dawn,
I watched a drop of water collect
And slowly roll the length of a spear-like leaf.
It shivered there, glimmering in the rays
Of the rising sun.
On the very point it quivered,
And then fell, softly, to earth.
So life, which has been compared
To numberless things,
Is to me a shining, perfect whole,
Gleaming for a moment, hesitating,
Then gone, softly,
To earth.

—*Frances Roberts,* '42.

My OPERATION



By CLARA NELL LYNN, 43

I KNOW that my operation isn't the best of topics. In fact, it is simply out of place, for operations are to be discussed only in the privacy of an old maids' sewing circle or over a bridge table. Oh, but what's the use! I've got to have a subject and some descriptive material, so here goes.

I remember quite well a morning about two months ago when I was on my way to Montgomery for a little matter of an appendectomy. The sun was making gifts of its brightest rays. The air had a new kind of spice in it—tangy and incisive. But all this didn't suit my mood, except the incisive air. Br-r-r. Now don't misunderstand me. I wasn't scared. I just had a most peculiar feeling in the pit of my stomach. The kind of feeling you have when you're going to a game with your Auburn friend—empty, longing. You seem to have cobwebs strung about the walls of your stomach. I have this feeling when I ride an elevator or when I swing in a grape-vine swing.

I finally arrived at the hospital and was taken to my room on second floor. When the nurse in the immaculate blue-and-white striped uniform first piled me into that bed on stilts, I began to think in terms of white and black. The bleached appearance of the bed linen, the floors, the walls, the uniforms of the nurses and internes, and even the clean, sickening, white smell of ether rather startled me. Perhaps by now my face had a blanched look—maybe. But I still wasn't frightened —only that cobwebby feeling.

Things began to darken when the nurse pierced my arm with a tiny sliver of steel. Even my inner emotions began to get gray. And when a negro orderly came to roll me away to the anesthetic room, it was too much for me.

While I was alone in the anesthetic room, the hypodermic put me on a merry-go-round at night, whirling darkness. As I was not yet entirely asleep, my mind gathered a million thoughts from the past. Rugged, jagged thoughts, piling in on each other, forcing hot flashes through my head. Then a dash of white—the doctor coming in to give me ether.

After my first breath of ether, my mind was like a broken, jumbled mass of springs and coils in an alarm clock. Each thought multiplied a thousand fold. Millions of voices shouted my reflections to me. I

could see them scrambling about in my mind. Someone was trying to force me through a drainpipe. There was no air. I dared not open my mouth, for I would scream each thought over the entire hall. Then I was falling through space—falling, falling through nothing and never finding a bottom. Finally—complete darkness, oblivion. When I woke up several hours later, everything was white again.

HAZE ABOUT THE MOON

Tonight is like no other night.
There is no clear-cut pattern of stars
Carved by some Infinite hand.
There is no vivid silhouette of tree designs
Flung against a clear sky.
There is haze about the moon.

Each sound, however small, is magnified
And turned and twisted
Into something weird, foreboding—
Befitting the mystic night.

The stars are gone:
They canot endure the heaviness of the atmosphere;
Clouds of mammoth size
Creep along in a sinister way.

Everything is blurred.
There is no serenity in the soul,
No placid thought, no calm surety.
There is only that intangible Feeling in the air,
Indescribable, yet existent.
There is haze about the moon.

—*Mary Grace Orr,* '42

WHEN *Labor* SPEAKS

By JEANNE APPLETON, '42

THE blonde secretary with University of Alabama colors on her lapel sped nimble fingers across the typewriter; some unseen musician drew notes of plaintive beauty from a nearby violin; in this same office a week before we had seen a seething mass of angry men come to be pacified and we could read backwards on the closed door "A. F. of L., Department of Alabama." We were waiting to see Mr. Sam Roper, state president of the American Federation of Labor, that the all-powerful being who pacifies the seething masses of angry workmen and directs the activities of the blonde, Alabama-inclined secretary.

A very refined-looking young man came out of the inner office. Mr. Roper, courteous, benign, in fact a picture of a true gentleman, was telling the genial young man, "Goodbye, I'll be thinking about you on my trip." (We later learned that he was leaving for the national A. F. of L. Convention in Cincinnati that evening.) So this is labor! That big bad wolf, that ogre that the public abhors, with whom it fears contact, resembles in appearance and manner our fathers and brothers! What is labor underneath this outer shell of gentlemanliness? It was our job to find out.

Mr. Roper said, "Come in, young ladies. And Mr. Moore," speaking to a pleasant-looking, middle-aged man, in a quiet gray suit, who was seated at a desk in the outer office, "Would you come in, too? These ladies from Alabama College would like to ask us a few questions about labor and our union in Alabama and I believe you can help them." We were shown into an office furnished with simple, dark mahogany furniture, green metal file cabinets, and autographed pictures of labor leaders in the state and nation tacked on the deep-toned, stained wall—noticeably absent was the picture (and autograph) of our friend the C. I. O. leader. "This is Mr. Tom Moore, former Commissioner of Labor in Alabama under Governor Bibb Graves, and I think he can help me answer your questions." With no more ado we set about to ask our obliging interviewees all the questions we could think of, and they very graciously answered them.

That most capital is not bad and all labor is not good was the theme of the two union leaders' ideas. They also expressed the view that unions are beneficial to management as well as to workers. Leaders in the union urge that members do their work well and in such a manner as to deserve increased wages, shorter hours, and better working conditions, and

make the most of these improvements over the old layout. (For labor, anyway.) The union often aids the management in searching for the best workers in various fields of endeavor, according to the interviewed.

Mr. Roper and Mr. Moore believe the A. F. of L. offers general benefits to the entire citizenry through its backing of progressive state and national legislative reforms. Free text books for school children were first advocated in Alabama at a state convention of the A. F. of L. in Mobile in 1904. This reform was effected in 1935. This union has strongly supported the teacher retirement fund which has been a point of discussion in Alabama for the past few years. We found these leaders taking the credit for an unbelievable number of legislative changes. The educational department in the national organization is headed by Spencer Miller, a graduate of Columbia University and holder of other degrees. His department is responsible for training young men and women in various kinds of work through the National Apprenticeship Service. The educational division provides authoritative persons to hold forums for workers and the general public. The A. F. of L. sponsors many night schools over the country. The Paul Hayne Night School in Birmingham is partly under A. F. of L. auspices. The educational department also sponsors dances, picnics and other entertainments and recreational facilities for union members. The union has stepped in and taken over the activities of the typical humane employers.

The three main advantages of joining a labor union, so Mr. Roper and Mr. Moore said, are to raise the standard of living for labor, to provide better working conditions, and to act as a coordinator between capital and labor. Mr. Roper and Mr. Moore told of the union's insurance on a small-scale plan to help in raising the workers' standard of living. Dues are applied to strike and lockout benefits, sickness and old-age insurance, and a five-hundred dollar mortuary benefit. Some trade unions have homes for their aged in Florida and California, and most of them give old-age pensions, amounting to a dollar a day when sixty years old, or when a worker is injured in work. As our interviewees pictured it, the union is a Salvation Army, humane employer, and democratic government all in one.

Mr. Roper and Mr. Moore were very regretful of the disorganization of southern agricultural labor. The national A. F. of L. is acting in this area, but progress has been very slow in the South, the region in which organization is probably most needed. The reason for not organizing is traceable to the ease with which negroes, who compose the majority of our agricultural labor, can be controlled. The landowners have refused to let the negroes organize, and since there is usually an excess of agricultural labor on hand, this feeling of the landowners has a great deal of weight. The A. F. of L. is trying to overcome this defi-

ciency in organization. Headway has been made in other parts of the country and there is hope for the South. (As they paused for breath in this word-avalanche of benefits that would have practically restored belief in Santa Claus or our shattered trust in fairy godmothers, we wondered secretly what C. I. O. would say of labor in either guise.)

Mr. Moore spoke of what teachers miss through not being organized. "You girls will probably be teachers, and this is one thing to watch. You teachers miss so many of the benefits that are your due by not being organized. Yes, you have the A. E. A., but this organization is more or less dominated by the high-salaried managerial class, such as the city and county superintendent and college officials. The city superintendent receiving five thousand dollars a year cannot work for and really want increased salaries, shorter hours, and so forth as can the little teacher receiving sixty dollars a month and having as part of her duties Sunday School, Community get-togethers, sweeping the schoolroom, and teaching. If the teachers would wake up to their just deserts they would be getting somewhere."

Mr. Roper concluded the interview by saying, "Capital is coming closer everyday to complete recognition of the union as a beneficial agent to both parties, and an understanding of what we want. I believe that ultimately capital will come over to the side of their more progressive brothers who have always seen the advantages and practical necessity of cooperating with labor."

As we strolled out into the brisk October air of crowded Third Avenue from this blonde secretary, wailing violin, and two gentlemen, we said to ourselves, "Why should anyone shy away from cooperation with such calm, clear-headed, straight-thinking labor leaders as these?" "But are they always as rational as this?" was one question still quietly tickling our minds; and a second, as a capitalist put it to us, echoed, "Can labor count many such gentlemen in its ranks?"

Editor's Note: *The Tower prints this interview, "When Labor Speaks," with an apology for the reporting of the "pro" of a question without its equally necessary "contra." We hope that the next issue may relay to you Capitalism's answer.*

THE TOWER invites you behind the scenes for a glimpse of an interesting experiment in group writing. Concentrating on a thought-provoking question, these contributors bring forth "Theorem 1940," a straightforward, uncompromising expression of pooled thought and mutual criticism.

The group: N. Favor, C. Methvin, E. Moncrief, M. Moore, M. G. Orr, F. Scarborough, M. Sterne, M. B. Ward.

THEOREM 1940:

What is Vital?

Given, a soul for infinity,
And vision of unknown quantity.
Challenged by some strange quality
That sends us on in restless quest,
We seek to find
The vital.

But for proof who can make claim?
Some I have seen call things vital
Which they may touch and know and name,
Fearing the power of the intangible.

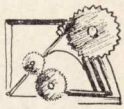
Others I have watched no longer seek,
Having lost in bland complacency
The vital in drowsy ritual, often said,
And numbing in monotony.

But I find Truth vital:
To see Truth through the blindfold
Placed by subtle fingers of delusion,
Truth heard over the deafening blast
Of propaganda.
And Truth no longer camouflaged by
Words coerced into false imagery.

* * * *

Look deeper than worn prototypes:
See here on this dusty country road
That dirty trudging farmer?
Did you hear the stifled murmur
Complaining from his jacket?
That was the voice of exhaustion—

The bitter end of year on year
Striving to meet demand
Of wife,
Of his ten children,
Of horses and hayracks,
Of capitalist and consumer.
These things are vital.



And further down the road
When you came to the town
Did you feel the shudder of machinery
As it ground personalities into warp
And woof of emaciation
And hopelessness
And despair?
Did you hear the high hum of turbines
That filter atoms through copper coils
To make incandescence in ovules?
These things are vital.
And as you turned down Second Street
Did you not feel an impertinent stare
Play havoc with your privacy?
The street was lined with those women,
With short faces,
With long faces,
And painted masks.
These things are vital.
And when you opened your eyes today
Did you feel the sting of death
And the prick of zestful living
Face each the other in herculean struggle?
These things are vital.

* * * *

Pictures are vital—I paint the sun:
See here in the tenements
Shut from the sun,
Our brothers, human like ourselves
Who die gazing
Upward at the ever-setting sun.
This sun never rises for them.
Here in the country, scorched by the sun
Are our brothers, human like ourselves.
These die gazing down the earth,

Away from the sun that never sets for them.
Here in the tenement,
No sun—no food—
Swollen bellies, full of nothing;
Legs bowed from climbing stairs that lead to nowhere,
And searching pavements that lead to garbage
pails already looted.
Here in the country,
Sun—and grain—

Broken bodies, with diets of molasses, fat-meat,
bread.
Bowed legs from picking cotton whose yield brings
nothing.
And reaping grain that can't be milled—
(Our god, Money!)
So the sun that never rises
Hears them say: "To the country,
The promised land—tomorrow—next day."
So the sun that never sets
Blushes as they say: "To the city,
Mecca—tomorrow—next day."

* * * *

I snicker at the social workers who
shovel out half-pints of Paradise
To God-for-saken-men—Sell them a house and farm
with fifty years to pay.
Give them two-days' scrap-work on the
W. P. A.
But go on! Spill your outworn tale of social justice:
Every man a right to vote
and rule his own dominion,
Every man a right to speak
outright his own opinion,
Every man a right to work—
there's still room at the top,
Every man a right to raise
his children as he wills,
Every man a right to profit
from the land he tills.

Go on! Keep telling them these yarns!
I'll help you tell your tale, build
Your fable with my Ford car ads;
On placards of the Chamber of Commerce,

In churches regularly
I'll give the folks the shallow hope
That now may soothe,
Forgetting that they still must drift
With faces tired of wanting,
Never finding.
I marvel at you, social worker,
Who bribe a man to gainless struggle.
I'll put in my nickel's worth
And maybe spring the jackpot
Crammed with all their
Nickel hopes!

* * * *

Morning: Black oiled wheels sang through the night
To the magnates' white-spat tapping,
"Mass production, mass production."
Today 1000 souls were born—
Fashioned by thin, cold, steel pieces—
Standardized products of the steel-age day.
Today 1000 perfected individuals were placed
On the market—a modern world, they say.
1000 personalities walked down Hodge-Podge Way.

Paper smell, black ink flare;
It is morning in Public Print Square.
Pamphlets, books—new editions
Old thought disguised in new repetitions.
Diplomatic keys to Europe
Score cards for personalities
Spiritual escapes on unwalked
Roads to Elysian fields—
And short political detours to Hell.

Noon: The souls hurried into Contention Square.
Red clapping hands, half-choked guffaws,
Baby kissing and back-slapping pair—
Shouting Economic Security and sweet-milk funds.
Their gold-ringed fingers are stroking money-starved
depression pockets.

The modest souls sauntered down Town Talk Blocks
Listening to the age's rediscovered Public Opinion—
"Soldiers live with underground conveniences
Buckets of food, running water,

Regular and fair wages,
War-time short hours."
(Undertakers are folding
Shirred white satin
Where bobbing lilies
Push the air
In shell-shot perfume.
Individuals are finding
Six-foot freedom of wills
And are crowding oppressed bones of an Older year—
Bones once vital.)

Late Afternoon: 1000 perfected individuals with heavy thud
Were trudging down Church Creed Street.
Over grape-stained communion cups
Smooth white hands were folding—
Praying for personal salvation.
Yesterday Brother Nonentity alias Lucifer
Broke his nuptial band for a career
Of Side Street's Philandering.
Today Convention crossed out his name.

Night: One thousand standardized individuals moved
Slowly back into Contention Square.
One rose, spoke,
"We must find the way."
His hand went out to touch one perfected soul.
A group had chosen a world-worn path to oblivion
And had slipped on death-cushioned feet into
their six-foot shelters.
The speaker turned to hear
Shrill hysterical laughter—
This group was sipping a patented opium—a
guaranteed dream-life.
The individual's hand was tugged;
A group whispered low,
"Standardized souls we are—
Here is our new Beethoven
A Milton and a Michaelangelo—
We will find the answer."

Morning: Five individuals are born.

* * * *

What tricks did Mother Nature pull from her box
of magic to make man King of beasts?
A perpendicular backbone, free hands, a thumb

for grasping, surplus cubic inches of cortex?
Glance back—Man has been a long, hopeful time coming.
See those helpless cells groping for life-salts
in the primeval slime of ancient seas—stretching
a framework of bones into protoplasm—building
lungs from gills—growing legs for climbing from
the muck—invading the land—grasping for language
and alphabets—struggling for reason to counsel
instinct. Man has always been a searcher, a hoper,
a climber.

See him now—taking control:
Turning soil, seed with
His tractors, his plough—Man's Food.
From hot blast furnaces
Skilled engineers, architects, craftsmen
Construct his home.
With microscopes, x-ray, and antiseptics
He procures, maintains his health.

And Life is good—But look!
Surplus food, idle mills
Make idle men and Poverty.
Guns, gas, floating mines
Create a man-made game with men for pawns;
God! How he fumbles and mixes controls;
Look ahead—and remember, he's a hoper, a climber.
In laboratory expeditions into the unknown, his
nimble mind-finger pries the seal from many
secrets. Each captured secret gives new power,
new hopes.
His mind shakes free the grasp of superstition, cults,
dogmas, rituals.
Through want, war, hate, he grasps new facts, dreams
of brotherhood, talks of Christ-ways.
He's a hoper, a climber, a builder.

* * * *

You need not toy with
The wan opiate of some veiled Utopia
Which has, far-distant vista,
No bond with our today;—
Out of muck and smear
Now see, and lose old fear,
A shaping silhouette above decay:

This thing we have—and this is beautiful:
Searching, fearless, probing,
A knife-like tongue of flame
Searing through the outworn tissue
Of each scar of prejudice—
Here is power without name
With which to lift old anchors, crash high barriers.
Here is swift and genuine alchemy
Distilling old bases into fine gold
Of Truth and clear reality;
Releasing into wreaths of curling smoke
The once blinding, now ethereal wisps
Of an outworn ideology.
Here is our hope, the VITAL!

Student Slant on PROPAGANDA

By NANCY VAUGHN, '41
ELLEN MONCRIEF, '41

Editor's Note: Events of the past weeks have brought a powerful word to an even stronger position in our national and individual consciousness. On our own campus it has been considered with no less interest, this word *propaganda.* After a consideration of the very alive material furnished by the Social Psychology class, the staff realizes that all term papers are by no means mere unrelieved pages of dry print. We decided to share the discovery with you.

Propaganda, we found, to be understood, must be viewed through its various media: Advertising, Newspapers, Books, Church, Movies, Radio. For further reading in one or all of these fields, we refer you to the bulletins published by the Bureau for Propaganda Analysis, whose efficient services are quoted in our series of studies. We present now, for lack of further space, a precis of each of two phases, choosing these particular ones because of their special significance and effectiveness in the twentieth century: "Propaganda and Advertising" by Nancy Vaughn and "Propaganda and the Movies" by Ellen Moncrief.

"Commercial Propagandists" By Nancy Vaughn

"In looking for a keyword to modern life, and particularly to contemporary American life, we need not go much further than pointing out 'change'." Our word *propaganda* is a vivid example of the latter, for within two years bounded by the World War, *propaganda* had left its original meaning, any means of convincing the unconverted for a political or religious faith, and had acquired its present "miasmic aura," according to Miss Vaughn.

She then quotes Leonard Doob's definition from his *Propaganda: Its Psychology and Technique,* "Intentional propaganda is a systematic attempt by an interested individual or individuals to control the attitudes of groups . . . through the use of suggestion and, consequently, to control their actions." From here she presents the interesting conclusion that for all practical purposes propagandist and advertiser are almost synonymous. With this opinion, and indulging in a bit of name-calling on our own, our advertiser may be titled a "commercial propagandist" whose manifestations we shall observe in the narrowed fields of magazine and newspaper advertising of goods and services.

"America has certainly fallen into the hands of its advertisers [who] . . . find themselves in possession of a reading, listening and a definitely gullible public. Perhaps nowhere do we find the seven propaganda devices—Name-Calling, Glittering Generalities, Transfer, Testimonial, Plain Folks, Card-Stacking, Band Wagon—used any more effectively than in the United States in the hands of American 'commercial propagandists'." Miss Vaughn substantiates her claim by an accompanying group of illustrations bearing visible evidence to the Chinese proverb which asserts that illustrations, attractive cuts, "are worth more than one thousand words."

These advertisers have used and are using detailed understanding of master psychologists to effect subtle advertising schemes. In the light of vast, newly-opened fields for this use it is surprising to find that, at least from the financial point of view, the magazine-newspaper medium still holds ascendancy due to its general class appeal and its facilities for timely presentation.

It presumably follows that an advertiser's job is no simple one to be approached casually. On the other hand, it exacts subtlety, and effective testing by various research methods, too voluminous to recount. These five approaches are mentioned: selecting the most advantageous media, using catchy slogans and trade-names, effective "feeling tone" (for positive response), attractive color and cut, and using delayed revealed propaganda.

Each of these factors has, of course, numerous, perhaps endless, subordinate features. Taking only one, it is interesting to note that "catchy"

trade-names through long and continuous repetition are often finally confused with the whole class to which the one item belongs. For example, the trade-name Victrola may be used by some people to designate a phonograph. Similarly, any mechanical refrigerator erroneously may be called a Frigidaire.

"And where does all this analyzing, breaking down and building up again bring us?" questions Miss Vaughn, who proceeds with her own observation:

"At least to the realization that propaganda in the hands of most advertisers is a powerful instrument and that by even limited understanding of their techniques we may not be too gullible but a little better prepared to cope with the tons of advertising and propaganda that confront us daily."

The Movies by Ellen Moncrief

Propaganda and the moving picture industry are within themselves a picture of large scale. With the briefness of the cinematic "flash", we present Ellen Moncrief who says that:

"For years propaganda has seasoned movies, newsreels, and commercial films." Strangely enough, the public has scarcely been conscious of this influence, and for several reasons. First, the picture theatre can use all the propaganda devices since these factors operate only on marginal areas of attention and create little audience awareness. Second, the movies offer an advantageous medium because, presenting a picture, they are alleged to present a fact. Third, it is obvious, too, that at least temporarily, the screen offers the accused no reply.

Perhaps nothing is so striking in the movie-propaganda picture as the background, the foundation, laid by our customary movie stereotypes. Movie producers, says Miss Moncrief, must consider the stock responses of the public, and translating these into certain well-known stereotypes, the movie-goer ultimately accepts the appeal, ignoring its conscious or unconscious propaganda. The following are stereotyped views which in essence assert that: War and its preparation are thrilling; the good life is the acquisitive life; catching the criminal solves the crime; successful culmination of romance resolves a couple's problems.

Miss Moncrief readily admits that there are a number of films that serve as exceptions to these generalities, but with our contented viewing of these one-sided patterns we fail to clamor for the enlightening "other half."

"The picture industry curbs social change," claims the writer, with its emphasis on the bright side, too often a fallacious emphasis. She advocates entertainment with a balance of problematic material. Though

she criticizes the movie shorts, she indicates that they are perhaps paving the way to a true picture of America and are occasionally a wedge for the presentation of truth. Miss Moncrief suggests the following subjects which would educate America for democracy: the injustice of lynching, sterilization, socialized medicine, relief measures, labor organization and the "isms" of government.

Since she realizes that the crux of the situation is the placid appeasement of American audiences by panaceas, Miss Moncrief suggests that we be educated to make more desirable choices.

"As the system now is, we can do little more than study the movies," analyzing them with unprejudiced questions and a consciousness of their possibilities as propaganda media.

"But also, let America add to its list of movie subjects, especially in the governmental, sociological, and economic fields. Let America become open-minded with a new movie scheme!"

THE RETURN

The Old Dragon once again
Lifts up his grizzled green head,
Scarred with the mark of Cain,
Frightening meek Peace, who fled.

Oh! frightful beast, who unchained
You from your horrid black pit?
Did someone say what is gained
In ambition's frenzied fit?

In your red eyes, did they see
The hideous murder which dwells?
Did they see reflections—key
To all mankind's countless hells.

No! they were blind and Truth fled
From their lips. They flung high
Your praise. I turned my head.
Youth said, "I don't want to die."

—*Sharleen Wells*, '40.

BOOK REVIEW

As told by the people and written by the Federal Writers' Project of the Works Progress Administration of North Carolina, Tennessee, and Georgia. Chapel Hill: 1939, *The University of North Carolina Press.*

Reviewed by MARY STERNE, '41

SINCE the "war between the states", we loyal Southerners have been particularly sensitive to any literature interpreting life south of the Mason-Dixon line. Today, as were our aristocratic grandparents in reconstruction days, we are quick to take offense unless the literature written depicts a Southland as prosperous and as promising as pre-war Dixie.

To name Dixie as the setting for such publications as *Tobacco Road, Stars Fell on Alabama,* and *Lamb in His Bosom* was to utter blasphemy; to create of the South such characters as Jeeter Lester, Cean, and the conjure women, was heresy; and to write as Erskine Caldwell, Carl Carmer and Caroline Miller was to be excommunicated by the holy state of Southern aristocracy. We sensitive Southerners have insisted that such novels and fiction as these depicted the exception and not the general case. We have vehemently declared that our conditions of tenancy and share-cropping are fictionized to create sensational best sellers for curious readers.

At last out of the turmoil of our Southern life itself, a book has been written which stands alone under the merciless scrutiny of jealous Southerner and interested Northerner, Easterner, and Westerner. This is a book that has an unquestionable power and appeal because it is written by and about the very southerners whom no one can interpret as they themselves can. In it the people themselves are saying *These Are Our Lives!* Here at last is a book written from the standpoint of the individual himself.

These individuals of every occupation and class tell their own origins, experiences, and emotions to skilled and understanding listeners. Farmers, mill hands, relief workers, and the unemployed find expression in this volume. The Negro as well as the country doctor is heard. Your acquaintance becomes enriched, for it is almost as if you were meeting these people themselves.

Most absorbing of all the monologues is the one in which you meet Kate Brumby at her spotless three-room shack one morning at nine o'clock. Kate is so hospitable as she invites you to share her dinner of pinto beans and biscuit, and to drink black coffee resembling dishwater in taste and appearance. With her little gray eyes sparkling she tells you her life—a full life of child labor in a factory, busy days of motherhood, widowhood, work and injury. Yet the story is not morbid for it has spots of humor that make it delightful and human. For example, Kate tells you of the time she filled her blind grandmother's pipe with powder, gunpowder, at that! Saying goodbye to Kate is hard, for you can't help admiring the courageous little woman who will keep fighting under the terrible strain until she conquers it or it conquers her.

You are depressed by the talk you have with teen-age Jimmy who says "I'd rather die than exist as I have been doing day after day in a factory." It makes you happy to hear Jimmy say he's going to Florida to get a job, and you breathe a little prayer that he won't ever get in another factory for he'd rather die, and you know Jimmy means it.

Maybe he'll get along pretty well like Millard Ketchum, called Weary Willie, to whom you speak at the C.C.C. camp. Ketchum has a good job with the government, he thinks, but he wishes he had more than eight dollars a month to spend. You decide that he's lucky to have that when you consider some of the other characters.

Being a day worker isn't bad, Dr. Johnson, the country practitioner tells you, if you don't have to work all night too. But he loves it all—from swapping plow beams for pills, to making life easier for unmarried mothers. He's even got a clinic for his people.

These Are Our Lives introduces us to other Southerners, shows their courage, and enlists for them our sympathy and respect. To those people who are genuinely interested in the rich variety of human experience, to those who can look at the world as if they are seeing it for the first time, pushing aside all patterns and doctrines that might be obstructive, this volume will be of inestimable value. *These Are Our Lives* has power in every line and trunth in every page. To read it is to read Southern life, and to read Southern life as it really is, is one true service we loyal Southerners can render to our beloved Dixie.

THE SONGS OF MAN

You who are young have heard them,
Though unheeded, perhaps, have they been.
You who are old have heard them,
And you, too, have passed them with deaf ears:

The songs of men . . .
Blissful murmurs of surface happiness,
Prosaic words, empty of meaning,
Spoken only to appease the god Convention.

But there are songs in every man's soul
Which are not heard,
Which forever battle within themselves:
Dissonant crashes of sound
Inspired by frustration, malice, disappointment;
Burning, heart-bleeding, hopeless notes of passionate
love and hate;
Deep, ever-aching tones of sorrow buried in the grooves
of the heart
Never to be chiseled out by man or God.

Never-changing are these songs of man—
Ageless are they—the essence of eternity.

Mary Grace Orr, '42.

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